

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace paragraph [0001] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This invention relates to storage devices for storing kitchen utensils. In particular, the invention is a device for holding a lid for [[to]] a pot, pan, or other cooking dish.

Please replace paragraph [0002] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0002] One problem often encountered while cooking is the need to momentarily uncover a pot, pan, or other cooking container for stirring or otherwise manipulating the food being prepared. A user generally needs one hand for removing and holding the lid, another hand for holding the pot or pan, and a third hand for operating the spoon or spatula to manipulate the food. Since most cooks only have two hands, this means that they have to find a location to temporarily place the lid. The available "places" usually include an unused burner (not always available), the counter (not always advisable for a hot lid and not always clean), the sink (often too distant or cluttered), or precariously balanced against an adjoining wall or appliance. This is commonly a prelude to a messy disaster.

Please replace paragraph [0011] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0011] The lid holding device of the present invention is an attractive, strong, and flexible clasping device that takes advantage of available vertical storage spaces. A user can mount the lid holding device on most available vertical surfaces, including walls, cabinet doors, interior cabinet walls, even the backsplash over the stove. A user can also use the lid holding device to display decorative lids or the most commonly used lids in work areas. In one embodiment incorporating a spring, a lid may even be stored on the underside of a cabinet or shelf, thus saving space which may be a scarce commodity in a kitchen.

Please replace paragraph [0033] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0033] A lid holding device 2 according to a first embodiment of the invention is depicted in Figs. 1-6. The lid holding device 2 is composed substantially of two components, a sliding member 4 and a mounting base 6. The sliding member 4 is both retained within and moves linearly with respect to the mounting base 6. The mounting base 6 may be of unitary construction, but functionally composed of multiple sections. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, a left wing section 8 extends laterally downward from the left side of the mounting base 6 and a right wing section 10 extends laterally downward from the right side of the mounting base 6. Immediately adjacent to each of the left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10 is an intermediate section 24 of the mounting base 6. The intermediate section 24 comprises a left intermediate section 24a and a right intermediate section 24b, which are ~~[[is]]~~ connected with ~~each of the left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10, respectively,~~ by an intermediate transition step 28. The left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10 lie in a common plane. The intermediate section 24 of the mounting base 6 lies in a plane parallel to but spaced apart from the plane which the left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10 define. The intermediate transition step 28 bridges the separation distance between the first plane of the left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10 and the second plane of the intermediate section 24.

Please replace paragraph [0036] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0036] The center section 26 may be interrupted by a window opening 36, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3, in this embodiment located in an upper portion of the center section 26. The top of the window opening 36 is defined by a top retention band 32, which is a narrow band of the center section 26 above the window opening 36. The bottom of the window opening 36 is similarly defined by an edge of the center section 26. The sides of the window opening 36 are defined by portions of the intermediate section 24 of the mounting base 6 on either side of the center section 26. The intermediate section 24 extends behind the window opening 36. As shown in Figs. 2 and 3, a left rear flange 34a extends from the left intermediate section 24a toward the center of the window opening 36. Similarly, a right rear flange 34b extends from the right intermediate ~~center~~ section 24b toward the center of the window opening 36. The left rear

flange 34a and the right rear flange 34b meet in the center of the window opening to contact each other at a flange seam 38. In the area of the window opening 36, there is no center transition step 30 since ~~[[as]]~~ the material of the mounting base 6 forming the left intermediate section 24a ~~[[24]]~~ lies in the same plane as ~~the left intermediate section 24a transitions to the left rear~~ flange 34a and ~~similarly as 34a; and, similarly,~~ the right intermediate section 24b lies in the same plane as transitions to the right rear flange 34b.

Please replace paragraph [0038] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0038] The sliding member 4 is retained within the ~~[[an]]~~ upper slot 66a formed in the mounting base 6 between the top retention band 32 and the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b of the intermediate section 24 on the rear side of the mounting base 6. The sliding member is further retained within the ~~[[a]]~~ lower slot 66b formed in the mounting base 6 between the center section 26 below the window opening 36 and the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b. That portion of the mounting base 6 forming the transition step 30 further retains the sliding member 4 within the mounting base 6 along the length of the mounting base 6 to restrain lateral movement of the sliding member 4. Another way to view the retention of the sliding member 4 within the mounting base 6 is to consider the center section 26 a channel. As depicted from the rear as in Fig. 2, the center transition steps 30 form the walls of a channel while the center section 26, including the top retention band ~~32 form~~ 32, forms the base of the channel. The window opening 36 is an aperture in the channel. The sliding member 4 fits within and travels along the channel. The sliding member 4 is further contained within the channel by the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b, which extend across the back surface of the sliding member 4 and prevent the sliding member 4 from being lifted out of the channel.

Please replace paragraph [0039] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0039] The location and height of the window opening 36, and consequently the height of the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b, may be varied depending upon the desired effect on the sliding member 4. For example, in the embodiment of Figs. 1-6, the window opening 36 is positioned in the top portion of the center section 26. This allows the sliding member 4 to travel

a greater distance upward than if the window opening were positioned in a lower portion of the center section 26, which would result in retention of a the protuberance 46 44 by the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b at a much lower point. This would result in a reduction in the diameter of the lid which the lid holding device 2 could hold. It should be apparent that increasing the height of the window opening 36 would have a similar effect. However, it may be desirable to increase the height of the window opening 36 or position the window opening 36 lower in the center section 26 in the event that the sliding member 4 is unstable and wobbles from front to back with respect to the mounting base 6. By providing greater height to either the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b or increasing the vertical span of the center section 26 above the window opening 36, more surface area contact is created between the sliding member 4 and the left and right rear flanges 34a, 34b, the center section 26, or both, thereby reducing any front to back pitching of the sliding member 4.

Please replace paragraph [0040] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0040] The sliding member 4 further has a slider retainer clip 16 at the top 40 of the sliding member 4. This slider retainer clip 16 may interface with the top retention band 32 (as shown to good advantage in Fig. 11 12), thereby further retaining the sliding member 4 within the mounting base 6. The bottom 42 of the sliding member 4 additionally has a protuberance 46 extending from the rear side of the sliding member 4. The protuberance 46 may interface with the bottom of the left rear flange 34a and right rear flange 34b at the flange seam 38 (as exemplified in Fig. 11 12), thereby further retaining the sliding member 4 within the mounting base 6. Although retained within the mounting base 6, the sliding member 4 is able to slide linearly in a vertical direction upward until restrained by the interface between the protuberance 46 and the mounting base 6 and downward until restrained by the interface between the slider retain clip 16 and the mounting base 6.

Please replace paragraph [0043] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0043] In this embodiment, the center section 26' may also be solid and not define a window opening. The lid holding device 2' when designed with the solid center section 26' may include an additional component rather than the left rear flange and right rear flange of the first embodiment. As shown in Fig. 8, a retention panel is provided between the left wing section 8 and the right wing section 10 on the rear side of the mounting base 6'. The retention panel 48 may be affixed to left and right wing sections 8, 10 at panel seams 50 by any appropriate means, for example, by welding or adhering, depending upon the material of the retention panel 48 and the mounting base 6'. In the embodiment of Figs. 7-9, a retention tab 52 may be provided at the bottom 42 of the sliding member 4' in lieu of the protuberance of the preceding embodiment. The retention tab 52 may be of unitary construction with the sliding member 4', for example, a punch-out tab extending rearward from the sliding member 4'. Alternately, a retention tab could be formed by an extension of the bottom of the sliding member 4 bent rearward (not shown). The retention tab 52 [[54]] may extend rearward an appropriate distance such that the retention tab 52 will interface with and be retained by the retention panel 48, but not so far that the retention tab 52 would interfere with the mounting surface.

Please replace paragraph **[0048]** of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0048] It should be apparent that many of the features described with respect to the second embodiment of the lid holding device of Figs. 7-9 may be incorporated with the features described with respect to the first embodiment of Figs. 1-6, and vice-versa. For example, the first embodiment need not have the intermediate section and could be configured with merely the left and right wing sections and the center section. Similarly, the second embodiment could incorporate an intermediate section, a window opening, and/or ~~and/or~~ left and right rear flanges as in the embodiment of Figs. 1-6. Additionally, the first embodiment could be formed without the window opening and employ a retention panel similar to the second embodiment instead of the left and right rear flanges. Further, the sliding member and center section of the first embodiment could be curved as in the second embodiment. Also, in lieu of the protuberance at the bottom of the sliding member, the first embodiment could employ a retention tab as described with respect to the second embodiment. The first embodiment could also incorporate an elastic member attached between the sliding member and the mounting base in a similar

manner as described with respect to the second embodiment. The left and right wing sections in both the first and second embodiments could also be pitched forward to ensure alignment between the slider retainer clip and the left wing and right wing retainer clips.

Please replace paragraph [0054] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0054] The lid retention device of the present invention may be composed of any sufficiently rigid material able to both support the weight of the lid and [[to]] withstand the heat of a hot lid removed from a pot, pan, or other container being heated on a stove, in an oven, or by some other heating device. In one embodiment, the lid holding device may be made out of metal, for example, aluminum, stainless steel, copper, nickel, tin, titanium, or a metal alloy, for example, brass, or any other metal or alloy of sufficient strength, rigidity, and ability to withstand the heat of a hot lid. The lid holding device may be formed by separately casting the sliding member and the mounting base and combining these cast members together. Alternatively, the lid holding device may be formed by cutting or punching basic forms of the sliding member and the mounting base out of sheets of metal. These basic forms may then be punched, pressed, bent or otherwise manipulated to form the various structural pieces of the sliding member and the mounting base.

Please replace paragraph [0055] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0055] One exemplary process for forming the lid holding device of Figs. 1-6 out of sheet metal is described as follows. The basic patterns of the sliding member and the mounting base may be transferred from a template to a sheet of stainless steel. The basic patterns of the sliding member and the mounting base are then cut out of the sheet of metal. Two horizontal slits are then cut in the mounting base pattern at the location of the top and bottom of the window opening. Two vertical slits are then cut from the top horizontal slit to the bottom horizontal slit. The vertical slits are spaced apart from each other a distance equivalent to the combined depth of the center transition steps on each side of the center section. The metal circumscribed by the slits is then removed. The rectangular area from which the metal is removed is centered with respect to the width of the horizontal slits. The mounting base pattern may then be placed into a metal

press with a mold in the form of the intermediate section, the center section, left wing section, and the right wing section. The metal press forms the intermediate transition steps and the center transition steps, off-setting the center section, the intermediate section, and the left and right wing sections in parallel planes. Note that if the rectangular area were not removed before pressing, there would be a buckle in the intermediate section behind the window opening because of excess metal material not forced forward to form the center section. The formation of the center transition steps forces the metal of the intermediate section toward the vertical axis and thus closes the gap between the left and right rear flanges previously defined by the rectangular area of metal removed. Each of the retainer clips may next be bent outward from initial tab extensions cut from the sheet metal as part of the patterns of the sliding member and mounting base. The protuberance on the rear side of the sliding member may be formed by a punch from the front side of the sliding member creating an indentation 44 on the front side. The sliding member may then be slid into to slots formed by the window in the mounting base. Significant force may be required to push the protuberance past the left and right rear flanges. However, once the protuberance passes the left and right rear flanges, the protuberance will be retained by the left and right rear flanges under normal usage conditions.

Please replace paragraph [0056] of the application as filed with the following amended paragraph:

[0056] Alternatively, the lid holding device may be manufactured from a plastic or composite material if the lid holding device is to be used merely for storage of a lid. Alternatively, the plastic or composite may be chosen to withstand the heat transferred by the lid when removed from a hot pot or pan and placed into the lid holding device. The plastic or composite may be molded to form the sliding member and the mounting base, which are then coupled together. In an embodiment employing a retention panel as in Fig. 8, the retention panel may be heat fused or ultrasonically welded to the mounting base. In some cases it may be desirable to make the major portions of the sliding member and the mounting base out of plastic or composite that may be unable to withstand the heat, but attach separate retainer clips of metal, plastic, or composite that are designed to withstand heat at the top of the sliding member and at ~~to~~ the left wing and right wing. In this manner, greater cost efficiencies in materials may be achieved.